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# STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

## Hunger Strike/Force Feeding

SOP 8.14

Rev. 5/01

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*Revisions: Rephrasing of assessment process for increased clarity.*

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### **PURPOSE: TO OUTLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURE REGARDING HUNGER STRIKES AND FORCE FEEDING IN ORDER TO PREVENT SUICIDES OF DETAINEES.**

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- I. The government has the authority, even a responsibility, to prevent suicides of detainees. As laws and court decisions change due to challenges presented by the different case scenarios of competent detainees making choices over their lives, the Standard Operating Procedure will change to reflect new or added requirements.
  - A. A detainee is referred to the clinic with a confirmed history of not eating for 72 hours. At this point the detainee is considered to be on a hunger strike.
  - B. The Health Service Administrator (HSA) will advise INS of the situation and isolate the detainee from the rest of the population in order to monitor food and fluid intake.
  - C. The *Hunger Strike Monitoring form* ( DIHS 839) is completed on a daily basis.
- II. If on-going assessments reveal the detainee's condition is deteriorating despite efforts to encourage food and fluid intake, then the CD will determine whether or not the detainees condition is life threatening.
  - A. The CD/HSA will notify the INS Officer in Charge of the facility in writing of their intentions to pursue force-feeding the detainee.
  - B. The CD/HSA will first contact the Division of Immigration Health Services (DIHS) Medical director who will coordinate with the DIHS legal counsel in Rockville, MD. The CD/HSA will then contact the US Attorneys Office of the city where the SPC=s INS District Office is located. The case will be fully discussed by both lawyers and a decision whether a court order is necessary or not will be made.
  - C. Force feeding will be pursued if the detainees condition is life threatening. If no court order is necessary, an INS representative will write a letter authorizing the CD to force-feed the detainee. At the same time INS will notify the detainee's lawyer and the consulate, of his/her country of origin, of this decision.
  - D. If a court order is necessary, the US Attorneys Office will make all arrangements for a court hearing.